

EXECUTIVE SESSION

come out of the money that is allocated for the State of Texas, are just extraordinarily unwise.

I have heard rumors to the effect that the majority is going to try to add this money back in the supplemental appropriations bill we will be taking up, I guess sometime in March. Of course, that would be a budgetary trick which would exacerbate the budget deficit and be in stark conflict with the kind of rhetoric we have heard from our colleagues on the majority side who have said that we need a pay-as-you-go budget. In other words, if there is going to be spending, there has to be commensurate offsets.

Cutting out of this so-called continuing resolution or Omnibus appropriations this \$3.1 billion for our military families and then coming back and adding it in as emergency spending in a supplemental avoids the budgetary requirement of an offset and, thus, will add to additional deficits which are irresponsible and certainly in conflict with the statements our colleagues have made on the other side.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Would the Senator from Texas yield for a question?

Mr. CORNYN. I certainly will.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I was just listening to his statement and agree that there is going to be a budget gimmick if this comes up in a supplemental. But is the Senator from Texas a part of an amendment we would like to proffer which would restore \$39.1 billion but cut .73 percent across the board in all of the other accounts in this bill except for defense, veterans, and homeland security, so that we could pay for it, be fiscally responsible, and yet do what we need to do for the Active-Duty military, not to drain their operations to fund military construction projects that should be funded in this bill? Is the Senator aware of that?

Mr. CORNYN. I am proud to be a cosponsor, along with the distinguished senior Senator from Texas, of an amendment which would accomplish that goal. This is the way to handle our budgetary responsibilities appropriately. I implore the majority leader to allow us an opportunity to have amendments and to have a full and fair debate on this continuing resolution. We started this Congress in a spirit of compromise, but certainly if the amendment tree is filled and we are denied an opportunity to have debate and consideration of an amendment such as that, it would be extraordinarily disappointing and in conflict with some of the early rhetoric and hopes we all had for bipartisan cooperation.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NOMINATION OF GENERAL GEORGE W. CASEY, JR., TO BE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of Calendar No. 15, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of General George W. Casey, Jr., to be Chief of Staff, United States Army.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 50 minutes for debate, with the time equally divided and controlled by the senior Senator from Michigan, Mr. LEVIN, and the senior Senator from Arizona, Mr. MCCAIN, or their designees, and 10 minutes for each of the leaders.

The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, may I inquire, how much time do I have again?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 50 minutes total. The Senator from Arizona gets 15 minutes and 15 minutes for the Senator from Michigan, and the leaders have 10 minutes each.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank the Chair.

I ask the clerk to tell me when I have consumed 8 minutes.

I come again this morning to the not particularly pleasant task of opposing the nomination of General Casey to be Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. I preface my remarks, again, with my appreciation for honorable service to the country, his family, and the sacrifices they have made for many years. This isn't a question of character because his character is outstanding; it is a question of judgment.

I will try to put this in context, why I am in opposition. For several years, I and a number of others have bemoaned and complained and criticized and been saddened as we have watched this train wreck in Iraq. Not long after the initial invasion, I came back from a visit to Iraq and visited with the then-Secretary of Defense, who bears great responsibility for this debacle, and history will judge him very badly for his performance as Secretary of Defense. I told him how it was that we were not going to win, we were not going to succeed, that we didn't have enough troops over there, that Anbar Province was going to erupt—basically all the things many of us saw were going to transpire. General Casey, for 2½ years up until recently, would come back to the Congress and say that things were going well. I quoted many quotes yesterday, from time to time, including in 2005, saying we could start withdrawing by 2006 and on and on and on, completely divorced from reality on the ground, as was the Secretary of Defense.

I will state at the beginning that Presidents are responsible, but Presidents also rely on the advice and coun-

sel of their military leaders. That is a normal thing and has happened in every conflict.

President Bush said time and time again: I have said to the American people, as Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. But I have also said our commanders on the ground will make that decision. We will talk to General Casey. On and on. The Army is getting on its feet. We have turned over a lot of territory to the Army. They are good fighters. I have spent a great deal of time with General Abizaid and General Casey. They are in Washington. They are generals who will be happy to tell me the way it is, not the way they think I would like to it be.

Time after time, it has been clear that the President of the United States, as appropriate, has been relying on the advice and counsel of commanders in the field who did not give him appropriate information or recommendations. We are all responsible. In the military, you are responsible for the decisions you make on the battlefield, particularly when they cost our most valuable and important asset—American blood.

In his opening statement at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on September 29, General Casey said: "The capacity of Iraqi security forces has increased quantitatively and qualitatively over the past year" and "we have also developed with the Iraqis a readiness reporting system, not unlike the one we have in place for our own forces. So over the past 18 months we have built enough Iraqi capacity where we can begin talking seriously about transitioning this counterinsurgency mission to them."

Did he realize at the time that statement was wrong? And when did he tell someone?

At the same hearing, General Casey said:

More coalition is not necessarily better. More and more capable Iraqi security forces are better. Increased coalition presence speeds the notion of occupation. It contributes to the dependency of Iraqi security forces on the coalition. It extends the amount of time it will take for Iraqi security forces to become self-reliant and exposes more coalition forces to attacks at a time when Iraqi security forces are increasingly available and increasingly capable.

There has been no sign of that. Why did it take 15 months for General Casey to change that assessment and then not even agree with the new strategy of five additional brigades, which most of us pray is enough and most of us believe is a direct contravention to the Powell doctrine, which is, use overwhelming force in order to gain military victory?

President Bush said General Casey will make decisions as to how many troops we have there. Why did it take 2½ years? Why did it have to take 2½ years of steady degradation for General Casey to figure out we didn't have enough troops there, and the situation is worsening in Iraq.

The NIE that came out yesterday should frighten anyone, any American,